

BOOK REVIEWS

Glandes Endocrines et Syphilis. By Paul Blum. 1948. Masson et Cie, Paris. Pp. 109. Price 250 fr.

This little book condenses in just over a hundred pages all up-to-date information relating to the interrelationship between syphilis and the endocrine glands. The author reviews the common endocrine disorders and shows how they can be produced by syphilitic disease during all its stages, including congenital syphilis. Clinical and laboratory findings are described, and the treatment outlined embraces details of antisyphilitic as well as hormonal therapy. The subjects discussed are numerous and range from syphilitic Graves' disease to syphilitic diabetes mellitus, and from syphilitic Simmonds' disease to Addison's disease of specific aetiology. The best chapters are those concerned with various syphilitic manifestations in the dysfunction of the testes, suprarenals, and pituitary gland. It appears that the treponema is most likely to attack the endocrine glands in the secondary and tertiary stages; gumma, fibrosis, and endarteritis are all common and will usually produce syndromes of endocrine hypofunction. Congenital syphilis seems to be an important factor in infantile endocrine disorders; and the establishment of the true aetiology is of great importance as antisyphilitic treatment can succeed where simple hormone therapy fails. The references are almost exclusively French, and many of the observations are from articles published in the past by the author himself. Some of the material is based on lectures delivered at St. Louis Hospital, Paris. Perhaps the book does not make it sufficiently clear that, if a patient has serological manifestations or even a history of syphilis, this does not necessarily mean that any endocrine disorder from which he may happen to suffer is of syphilitic origin.

On the whole, this very interesting and stimulating monograph will be welcomed by venereologists and general physicians alike. It deals with a subject well worth more attention than has hitherto been given to it by venereologists.

A. I. S.-K.

The Invert and his Social Adjustment. By "Anomaly." (To which is added a Sequel by the same author.) With an Introduction by R. H. Thouless, M.A., Ph.D. 1948. London: Baillière, Tindall, and Cox. Pp. 290. Price 8s. 6d.

This excellent little book makes a welcome reappearance. It was first printed in 1927, was reprinted in 1929, and is now with us again not revised, as the author points out, but with the addition of a sequel in which he tells us how his ideas have evolved over the years. The author was fortunate enough to acquire for his book a sympathetic and well balanced introduction by Dr.

R. H. Thouless, the well known psychologist. It is made clear, however, that Dr. Thouless has been in no way concerned with the sequel. This book is obviously the product of much thought, wisdom, and experience by one who is himself an invert. His purpose, as he remarks in his preface, is to "urge consideration of certain phases of the question" on which his own experience and observations may cast some light. In this he has succeeded admirably. He is a layman with no scientific qualifications or pretensions, and the book, written in a lucid and cultured style, is refreshingly free from pseudo-scientific jargon. The emphasis is on the problem of social adjustment, and there is an eloquent plea for a more humane and sensible attitude by society in relation to these unfortunate people. Few will cavil at the advice given to those who have to deal with inverts as well as to inverts themselves. Speculating tentatively on causes and effects, "Anomaly" puts forward a theory of parallels, based on the fact that, apart from the difference in relation to sexual stimulation, invert psychology is exactly parallel to normal psychology.

It follows from this that the flagrant inverts who appear in police courts are no more typical of inverts as a whole than their heterosexual equivalents are of normal men and women. "Anomaly" maintains throughout the view that normality is desirable, and that if cure is possible the invert should be prepared to submit himself to it. In stressing the importance of continence he gives salutary warning to those who ignore this advice.

The first part contains a chapter on bisexuality, with a footnote referring to a later chapter, headed "polarity," in which some interesting views are expressed on the nature of mutual attraction between individuals. This theory, if accepted, could also explain some of the hitherto inexplicable attractions which are a common feature of everyday life between men and women. Credit must be awarded the author for having evolved this theory on his own, as he may not be familiar with Otto Weininger's "Sex and Character," written in 1903, in which a similar theory is worked out in mathematical terms. There are good chapters on the law and on blackmail, and there is an interesting discussion on literature, but it will be appreciated that this aspect of the subject cannot be surveyed adequately within the confines of a single chapter.

This book is commended to all, including venereologists, who may have to deal with male inverts and their peculiar problems. The publishers are to be congratulated on their courage and common sense in producing this volume, which deserves a wide sale. This will depend largely on word-of-mouth recommendation.

F. G. M.